



The President's Daily Brief

March 25, 1976

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LEBANON-SYRIA

Syrian mediators are still trying to gain agreement from leftist leader Kamal Jumblatt to Damascus' peace proposal; Jumblatt is scheduled to meet with President Asad today. Asad's handling of the current crisis is apparently creating dissatisfaction within the Syrian military, which may further complicate his efforts to obtain a cease-fire.

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Syrian officers may also be worried that Damascus will become bogged down militarily in Lebanon or, even worse, become involved in an unwanted conflict with the Israelis.

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The continued defiance of Jumblatt and other leftist leaders creates a dilemma for Asad. Faced with the prospect of the collapse of his mediation efforts, he probably feels under strong pressure to use more Syrian regulars to restore order. If he cracks down too heavily on recalcitrant leftists, however, he may provoke further discord within his own military. Asad's enemies hope he will make a serious miscalculation on Lebanon, but Asad is adept at outmaneuvering his opponents and thus far military dissension does not appear to have reached the stage where it threatens his position.

There are no indications that Syria has moved additional forces into Lebanon in the past few days. Israel has

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apparently taken no action beyond sending reconnaissance missions over southern and central Lebanon.

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CHINA

The campaign criticizing Teng Hsiao-ping, now nearly two months old, continues to leave open the possibility that Teng can redeem himself if he admits his mistakes. This formulation leaves Teng a way out of his difficulties; it also serves a similar purpose for his opponents should their efforts to remove him fall short. Recent articles in the media indicate, in fact, that Teng's opponents recognize they have chosen a formidable adversary.

Chinese officials have frequently used the theme of Teng's possible redemption in discussions with foreigners, presumably to give the outside world an impression of patience and reasonableness. The same theme has surfaced from time to time within China. An article in the March 21 issue of *People's Daily*, although no less critical of Teng than earlier material, ends with the statement that "people are watching" Teng to see whether he will change his ways and "truly repent."

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The PRC-controlled press in Hong Kong reportedly has been told by Peking to refer to Teng as "comrade," indicating that he remains a member in good standing of the party.

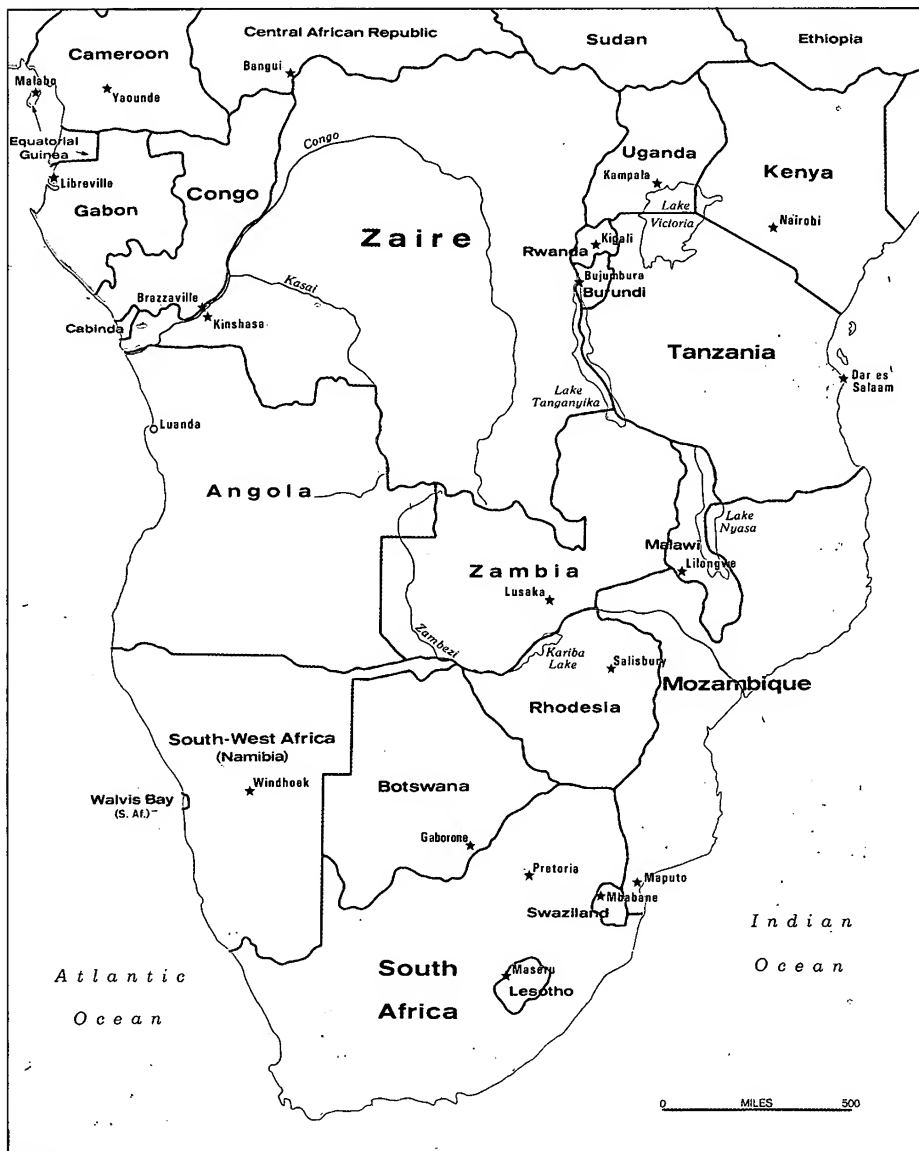
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The article in the *People's Daily* stated that Teng "holds a high position and certain power" and expressed concern that he could use this power in his own interest and that of his supporters. The party theoretical journal *Red Flag* has indicated that Teng and his followers are putting up a struggle, noting that after their first major setback--presumably when Teng was blocked from the premiership--they have fought back "ten times as hard."

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Response to the campaign against Teng remains mixed. Some areas are pursuing it with a noticeable lack of enthusiasm, while others seem to be promoting it more vigorously. The recent public appearance of some provincial officials who, like Teng, were stripped of power during the Cultural Revolution and subsequently reinstated, indicates the campaign has not "broadened" in the way its originators may have hoped.

Southern Africa



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ZAMBIA-RHODESIA

Zambian Prime Minister Mudenda recently described the ground rules Lusaka will impose on Rhodesian insurgents if and when they are allowed to conduct guerrilla campaigns from Zambia.

[REDACTED] Mudenda has stated that the insurgents would be provided safe haven, tactical information on Rhodesian border posts, small boats for river crossing, and possibly transportation for arms and equipment. Training will not be allowed in Zambia, and Lusaka will not act as an intermediary for procurement or shipment of arms to the insurgents.

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Cuban and non-African forces will not be allowed to transit Zambia or participate with the guerrillas in military operations from there. Neither will direct involvement be permitted in Zambia by non-African governments in the form of military aid, financing, or other types of support to the liberation movements. All non-African support must move through Tanzania and Mozambique.

The Zambian government has long maintained tight control over the activities of liberation movements within Zambia. The new restrictions clearly reflect Lusaka's concern over the Soviet and Cuban role in Angola, and are intended to prevent any such involvement with Rhodesian insurgents inside Zambia.

USSR

The Soviets have recently made significant gains in their program to develop a nuclear-fusion reactor, also a major goal of US nuclear research.

A fusion reaction will produce energy by the same process as a hydrogen bomb, but the energy will be released slowly and in a controlled manner. The fuel is deuterium, a form of hydrogen available in virtually unlimited quantities in water. The problem is to raise the temperature of the deuterium to about that of the sun to ignite the fusion reaction and then to continue the reaction at that temperature while extracting usable energy.

Soviet scientists have achieved impressive results with a fusion research device. Based on these results, they now plan to build a much larger device to demonstrate conclusively that energy can be produced in this way.

The US program, which is smaller in both funding and manpower, is expected to match the recent Soviet achievements later this year. However, the Soviet fusion program probably will demonstrate the feasibility of producing fusion energy before the US does. Many formidable engineering problems will remain before an electric power plant based on fusion energy can be built.

NOTES

Argentina's new military junta is firmly in place and shows every sign that it intends to retain power for some time.

There has been little violence so far, but stiff penalties have been decreed for anyone who assists the terrorist cause. The government has banned political and labor union activity, closed congress, suspended the supreme court, and is appointing military governors for the provinces. The new leadership is friendly to the US and will strive to improve Argentina's ties with this country which they hope will provide investment and new capital to cover Buenos Aires' huge debt payments and current-account deficit.

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Portugal's Revolutionary Council, after an all-night session, reaffirmed April 25 as the date for legislative assembly elections.

The so-called "operational" faction within the Council presumably mustered the strength to overrule arguments by those, including President Costa Gomes and Foreign Minister Antunes

The "operational" have been reluctant to risk public disapproval by going back on assurances that the vote would be held as scheduled.

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